What exactly did the NSDAP (National Socialist German Worker's Party) represent and who were its founding members? Why and how did Adolf Hitler transform the party from an unimpressive proletariat workers' party to a full-fledged political machine that obtained absolute power in Germany? Perhaps more important, how was it funded? We answer these questions in this introduction. But first, we begin with an examination of the early stages of the NSDAP and its recruiting process. One must understand how this process unfolded if one is to understand the NSDAP's position on Judaism and Freemasonry as well as the prevailing social and political order of the day. Naturally, we also reveal some of the other important aspects of its early development, which necessitates a fair amount of myth busting about Hitler, including who actually gave him money.

Triumvirate: Leadership, development and unity

Adolf Hitler, contrary to his own self-myths and the myths of others, was not poor—at least not until he had drained his savings and entitlements gallivanting in Vienna. Many historians have written that Hitler simply lived day-to-day wasting both his money and time, but in so doing they overlook Hitler's experiences and 'life education' that later played such an important role in the development and direction of National Socialism as well as the Second World War. The development and direction of both can be traced to Hitler's experiences during those "lost" years.

Hitler, like so many other young German men and women of his day, fell from middle-class status into that of the "wretched proletariat." This was something that young Hitler refused to accept. He was deeply embittered by his Vienna experiences, which offered false promises of prosperity and hope for young people with enough willpower and talent. The prevailing dissonance of the time and place in which he grew up inculcated in him a burning desire to change these circumstances, which is precisely what he did after 1933. Hitler was so resentful of the class-ridden society that was Vienna, and Austria and Europe generally, that one of his key aims throughout both the peace and war years was cultivating a system of merit. One's birth station was not what mattered. What mattered were one's talent, loyalty, dependability and fortitude, notably in the face of adversity

and uncertainty. Hitler was able to overcome most imbedded class barriers in two distinct ways:

He recruited both men and women from all social classes and accordingly tailored his speech and disposition to each, depending on his/her social standing.

He supplanted economic valuation with racial valuation.

Let's look at the first point. Hitler needed the broadest spectrum of German society he could get, so this meant that he needed to appeal to men, women, young, old, wealthy, poor, unemployed and employed alike. Women were amongst Hitler's most devoted and fervent supporters in the early years. So were low-wage earners, small businessmen and foreign nobles, such as White Russian émigrés who wished to see the return of the Russian monarchy. They provided Hitler with a physical audience, elite and business connections and monetary support, most of which ended up being granted in the form of loans. Hitler needed industrialists as much as he needed the workers, elites and disenfranchised foreigners. Since his goal was to raise the station of all lower-class ethnic Germans, he had to win them all together, which required a strategy of multi-class appeal. When he met and spoke with counts, duchesses and other members of the former royalty, he addressed them in a royal manner. His etiquette, speech and personal manners proved impeccable in such company. When he met or spoke with industrialists, such as Fritz Thyssen, he tailored his behavior and manner to match that of the hopes and fears of industrialist Germany. At the same time he was careful to scale back his socialistic language in such company, so that the industrialists would not misidentify him as a Marxist-Communist. He had to convince them that he would crush Marxist-Communism and uphold their industrial power base in the face of the growing mass of disenchanted, underpaid workers who felt they were being cheated and exploited by German industry. Whenever things got economically tough, the workers suffered wage and benefit cuts. They blamed the industrialists, but Hitler saw that the industrialists were also suffering: many went bankrupt during the inflation as well as during the Great Depression. The crippling Versailles reparations forced most German industrialists and exporters into an untenable economic position, which in turn harmed German workers. This meant that Hitler had to at least hint at future German rearmament, which was covertly occurring anyway. On the other hand, Hitler had to promise the workers, his single largest and most

important support base in almost every respect in the formative years, that he would not allow the state or industry to exploit them or continue treating them as automatons. We can see that balancing the wants and needs of these three core sectors of class-ridden Germany was far from simple. But Hitler did it, and nearly bloodlessly (relative to the Communist revolutions in Russia and throughout Eastern Europe).

Now to the second point: Hitler had to come up with a unifying ideology for Germanic peoples. This task seems simple in retrospect, because Germany was a homogenous society by today's standards. However, back then this was not how the German situation was seen. Germany may have been racially homogenous, but class antagonisms were so deep-seated that few if any German elites and nobles were interested in sharing political or social power with lower-class and middle-class Germans. The Junkers (estates Lords) treated their farmhands (serfs) as second- or third-class citizens and ordered them to pack up and get out if they dared to vote against their landlord employers. According to James and Suzanne Pool's research, many of the Junkers, notably the friends of von Hindenburg, refused to discontinue living the feudal order, which helped fuel the growing mass discontent for monarchy. This only served the interests of republicans and Freemasons, both of whom wished to see the end of monarchy for good. We will discuss their motivations later. For now it is enough to say that their motives were far from benevolent. German class divisions trumped any sort of racial or ethnic solidarity. Not surprisingly, one finds that the desire to unite all Germans as racial comrades was a desire shared almost entirely amongst the lower and middle classes, and even many middle-class Germans did everything they could to cling to their bourgeois life station, even if it meant keeping the lower-classes downtrodden. As one can see, Hitler's goal was anything but simple.

How, then, did Hitler unite Germans? And how successful was he? Hitler united Germans by invoking an ideological concept similar to Italy's Romanita, as espoused by Benito Mussolini. Hitler's concept was Nordicism: the basic, simplified premise of which was that all Germanic peoples were united by their Nordic racial component, and because they were united by this common "race soul" or blood component, how could they fight or be divided? While such a unifying idea sounded feasible and reasonable to many, some

resisted nonetheless. The Junkers, former nobility, and many other business elites in Germany saw Hitler as nothing other than a lowly former corporal who had no clout given his petit bourgeois (lower middle-class) upbringing. Hitler was only partially successful in uniting all Germans as Volksgenossen. His lack of complete success in this regard, an unattainable goal to be sure, later proved to be his undoing. Elites amongst the officer corps did immeasurable damage to Hitler and his war effort, but the story of their treachery and sabotage is beyond the scope of this discussion.

Might Hitler have been more successful had he been more racially inclusive early on? Not necessarily. Mussolini, unlike Hitler, was not racially exclusive at any point and expended a great deal of effort and time attempting to recruit non-Italians to the Italian fascist cause. He was largely unsuccessful, especially in Ethiopia—this in spite of the fact that he had Ethiopians trained as pilots (before the Tuskegee Airmen even came into being) and promised them higher status within a Fascist Italian Empire. We may deduce from this example that Hitler having merely extended his hand openly in the beginning to non-Germans would not have guaranteed National Socialism's political or military success. Mussolini did so and his tolerant hand was rejected. Indeed the U.S. and Britain did not win the Second World War due to non-white conscription, but because they supported and funded the Soviet war machine and were willing to bomb Germany indiscriminately. Anyway, this brings us back to our main point, which is that unifying a body of people, regardless of whether it is homogenous or diverse, is no easy task. Hitler was only able to convince the lower and middle classes that racial value must supersede economic (class) value. Most of the German elites were never won over to his Nordicism.

So, what does all of this mean? First, it means that a party that wishes to succeed in a Western Liberal-Democratic context must appeal to women and men both, citizens of all ages, and all social classes. A sensible and serious leader and party cannot afford to leave any group out. Naturally this all depends on the individual nation and citizenry in question, as Hitler's brand of politics and leadership were formed with a specific time, culture, people and place in mind. It was not intended for export, but for adaptation in multiple contexts. Hitler's brand of politics was in fact largely modeled after Mussolini's as well as the leadership of the Austrian mayor Karl Lueger.

Second, it means that the masses are more important to a party's success than the elites, because of their numbers. Only the masses have the power to invoke fear in the upper-class by threatening to support violent revolutionary parties and organizations, which are often led and funded by hostile fifth-columnists. The Communist Party (KPD) was the only party besides Hitler's that evoked genuine fear in the elite classes of Germany. Hitler and the NSDAP could not be ignored for the very reason that they, besides the Marxist-Communists, had the largest mass following in Germany at the time. Industrialists could not afford to anger or rebuff Hitler and the NSDAP; if they did, then Hitler's followers would quickly have swelled the ranks of the Communists or perhaps have even overthrown him, as Ernst Röhm and many SA members wished to do. Hitler's party was the only non-Communist, nationalist party that offered the lower and middle classes a better standing in German society. Given Hitler's ability to keep the overwhelming majority of his followers in line and loyal meant that he alone could prevent a transitional bloodbath, which is what most of the upper-class Germans feared the most. And this is exactly what he did. What's important to bear in mind, however, is that Hitler needed a credible threat to maintain his personal and political leverage over the upper classes and big business. Without the Communists to threaten them via mass upheaval and bloodshed, the industrialists and former nobility had little reason other than patriotism to support Hitler and the NSDAP.

Third, a citizenry that wishes to remain united needs a party that can accomplish this. Bavarians wanted to secede from Germany and become an independent state. Big business demanded an end to the Junker estates that squandered numerous government bailouts and demanded trade tariffs that harmed German industry. The Junkers did not care whether the industrialists suffered, so long as their estates were still in their name and they could live a lavish lifestyle of luxury at the German taxpayers' expense. To mediate such divisiveness, Hitler invoked Nordicism, which called on Germans to recognize and value their blood ties instead of their social standing (based on wealth). This unifying ideology provided Hitler with the necessary means to develop a system of merit: one could rise to the top of National Socialist society regardless of one's parents' or personal finances, because one was equal to all other Germans from the racial point-of-view. Hitler's German racialism and anti-Semitism were the practical means for

achieving classless unity among formerly divided Germans. Hitler used a similar approach later on with the Waffen-SS. He turned an exclusively German organizational concept (the Allgemeine SS) into an international, multiethnic idea by uniting everyone who participated against Jewish-Bolshevism, the enemy of "all peoples."

Adolf Hitler

Hitler salutes marching National Socialists in Weimar, October 1930.

Bundesarchiv, Bild 102-10541 / Unknown / CC-BY-SA [CC-BY-SA-3.0-de (www.creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/de/deed.en)], via Wikimedia Commons

Initial member recruitment

Like any grassroots party, the NSDAP developed organically from amongst a handful of hardcore ideologues, the primary catalyst having been Adolf Hitler. But the NSDAP did not spring up on its own; it instead arose from out of a party that already had a platform, leadership core, and small committed following. This was the German Workers' Party led by Anton Drexler. Hitler was actually appointed by the Army to spy on the German Workers' Party. The Army was interested in two things: locating nationalists for its own designs and rooting out Communists who threatened to turn Germany into a subservient satellite of Moscow. Hitler's speaking skills and interest in politics led the Army to select him for this covert task. He took a liking to Drexler and many of his ideas, so he finally signed up and was issued a membership card with his name and membership number on it, a tradition that Hitler maintained in his NSDAP. While Hitler began his political career as the propagandist for the Workers' party, he was quick to identify the party's main problems: it appealed to too few and had no outreach venue other than speaking engagements, which were often drab. He therefore focused on developing his own talents, which surpassed Drexler's, and forming his own designs for the Workers' party; hence the birth of the NSDAP. Hitler was quick to capitalize on Drexler's connections to wealthy Thule Society members. He did not join Thule, but requested their patronage. They alone significantly enhanced the potential for what was now his party to appeal to upper-class Germans, who, in turn, also helped fund the party. After he quit the Army, Hitler threw himself into the development of the NSDAP with unbounded determination.

While Drexler and his core focused entirely on winning over German workers, Hitler had eyes for larger audiences and outreach. His relationships with White Russian émigrés, wealthy Thule members, and especially Gottfried Feder (economist) and Dietrich Eckart (philosopher and writer) proved invaluable in his acquisition of the bankrupt Völkischer Beobachter (VB). Feder together with two other early NSDAP members owned 30,000 shares of the VB. Dietrich Eckart was able to obtain a loan for RM 60,000 from the sympathetic General Ritter von Epp to acquire the VB. The rest of the RM 120,000 price tag came from an industrialist named Dr. Gottfried Grandel, who was won over by Hitler's personal appeal to him. Eckart likely helped out too, along with Dr. Gutberlet (who pledged RM 5,000).

According to the Pools, Hitler's early supporters came from a wide range of classes, nationalities and ethnic backgrounds. Numerous wealthy White Russian émigrés, who had Thule contacts, formed an alliance with the NSDAP and allegedly raised "vast sums of money" for Hitler—i.e. according to an official 1923 file note. There was Henry Ford, who was anti-Jewish and wished to spread his message to receptive nations. Benito Mussolini's personal agents were known to have established contact with NSDAP members in Germany, likely in order to arrange the transfer of financial support from the Duce. The Russian Grand Duchess Victoria, who was pro-monarchy and anti-Bolshevik, gave Hitler money. Sir Henry Deterding of Royal Dutch Shell Corporation offered Hitler vast amounts of money in 1931, '32 and '33 in exchange for a guarantee that he would regain his expropriated oil interests from the Bolsheviks at some future point in time. The amount was likely between 30 and 55 million pounds sterling. Deterding was so pro-German that he ended up marrying a National Socialist woman and even moved to Germany. He, like so many other German elites, realized that only an assertive foreign policy could secure Germany's economic survival in a world in which France and England had a monopoly over one-quarter of the globe and were determined to crush Germany's global competitiveness.

The Germans had tried everything else, including complying with the Versailles reparations, which was de facto theft. This "treaty" was in fact designed with one goal in mind: the permanent crippling of German industrial competition. Ernst Röhm was a

fervent German nationalist who channeled Army funds to the NSDAP via various front organizations. The Thule Society, which was pan-Germanic and nationalist, not only contributed members to the NSDAP but helped it raise a lot of money. The two German jewelers Josef Füss and Herr Gahr supported Hitler. A certain Mr. Pöschl, a small businessman, gave to Hitler early on. Quirin Diestl was another early supporter who gave small funds. Oscar Koerner, a toy shop owner, likewise gave money to the NSDAP. Dr. Friedrich Krohn, a dentist, gave as much as he could. Adolf Müller helped the NSDAP keep the VB going by endlessly extending credit to Hitler. Ms. Hoffmann, the widow of a headmaster, contributed regularly. Numerous friends of General Ludendorff, a Thule member, provided the NSDAP with funding. A significant number of prominent foreigners and German nationals living or working in Austria, Britain, Czechoslovakia, Finland, France, Italy, Holland, Hungary, Switzerland, Sweden and America gave Hitler money, much of it via Winifred Wagner, Kurt Lüdecke and Hungarian nationalists like Gömbös. The German Free Corps members gave Hitler money, and so did many Stahlhelm members. Several right-wing German business interests, such as Emil Kirdorf of the covert Ruhrlade group, gave Hitler money, along with many business interests that usually supported Alfred Hugenberg (a man who tried to use Hitler for his own ends). There was also General Ritter von Epp, who helped Dietrich Eckart and the NSDAP purchase the VB; Dr. Emil Gansser, who had connections to wealthy Protestants; Admiral Schröder, a former naval commander; Baron Sebottendorf, who had connections to J. F. Lehmann (a Thule member, financier and publisher for the German Navy) and sympathetic naval officers; Herr Schaffer, who acquired weapons for Hitler's SA; Kurt Lüdecke, and through him two Jewish arms dealers who were either 1) not privy to who Lüdecke was or 2) had no reason to fear Hitler (this was the early 1920s after all); possibly the Duke of Anhalt and Count Fugger; Ernst Hanfstaengl, a wealthy Harvard graduate with numerous American connections and some wealth of his own; the wealthy Magda Quandt, who married Joseph Goebbels and who had elite connections; Fritz Thyssen, who later denied that he gave substantial sums to Hitler and Göring, in 1929 and off and on throughout the 1930s, both of whom he liked very much; and so forth.

No Warburgs. No Rothschilds. No Rockefellers. While the Rockefellers indirectly came into Hitler's financial sphere by way of Standard Oil technical investments and the Warburgs via I. G. Farben and J. H. Stein later on, neither gave Hitler any financial

support before 1933. And neither directly supported or paid Hitler at any point in time. The Sidney Warburg story is pure fabrication. Fritz Thyssen and some of Hugenberg's heavy industrial connections, not James Warburg, gave Hitler substantial monetary gifts in 1929 (at least RM 1,250,000) and Deterding and several German coal companies took care of Hitler in the early 1930s. While Hitler spent a vast amount on campaigning, he was by no means rolling in untraceable money. All of his funding was carefully accounted for and most of it came from VB advertising; party dues, insurance, and speaking fees; Gregor Strasser's left-wing faction, which received RM 10,000 per month in 1931; the good will of VB publisher Adolf Müller; and the financial frugality of party treasurer Franz Schwarz, whose meticulous party financial records were destroyed. The Americans interrogated him so brutally that he died in 1946 in British captivity. His records denoting even Hitler's anonymous donors never turned up anywhere. The Pools suspect that the American occupiers destroyed them.

As for Goebbels's remark on 17 January 1932 that the finances of the party "suddenly improved," this was not exactly true. The truth is that the party's credit line suddenly improved, and this was thanks to the maneuverings of Franz von Papen and Baron Kurt von Schröder with his syndicate of investors, including a number of prominent heavy industrialists, the Hamburg-America Steamship Line, the Stein Bank of Cologne, Commerz und Privat Bank, the Gelsenkirchen Mine Company, Deutsche Bank, Reichskredit-Gesellschaft Bank, Allianz Insurance, members of the potash industry, the Brabag Coal Company, Deutsches Erdöl, and a number of other brown-coal industrialists. While Hitler tolerated fifth-column banks like M. M. Warburg and the Temple Bank (a special account created for the Temple Society by the Reichsbank to fund Ha'avara emigration), he eventually restricted and regulated their business opportunities and forced them to assist with financing Jewish emigration. Hitler's goal was to increasingly inhibit and thereby financially squeeze the foreign banks until they were unable to exist any longer and had to relocate outside Germany—the same policy he employed to encourage Jewish emigration and business closures. One such example was the Germanization (i.e. German takeover) of two Jewish ironworks plants in the Rhön region in 1937.

Moving on to the actual recruitment process, potential recruits were approached on the streets and at meetings and speaking engagements. They were given flyers or pamphlets. Sometimes Hitler or other core members of the party were invited to speak or converse privately with industrialists or nobles who were interested in a non-Communist, nationalist party. Contrary to myths like that concerning Sidney Warburg, Hitler and the right-wing faction of the NSDAP did not receive as much industrial or banker funding, before 1933, as the Strasser brothers, the Social Democrats (SPD) or even Hugenberg's Nationalist Party. The reason why Hitler and the NSDAP never received the same level of financial or moral support early on was three-fold: (a) the industrialists and many Junkers did not trust Hitler given his socialist stance on many issues; (b) most industrialists and Junkers were not financially threatened enough to back a revolutionary party like Hitler's (they were still satisfied with the status quo); and (c) they were leery of his anti-Jewish stance.

Back to recruitment: most potential recruits and financial supporters heard about Hitler and the NSDAP via word of mouth. Nothing else was as effective as this. When men like Scheubner-Richter, Schacht, Borsig, Kirdorf and Thyssen recommended the NSDAP and personally endorsed Hitler, wealthy and other upper- and middle-class Germans were willing to seriously consider Hitler and his party. Hitler was invited to speak to heavy industrialists in 1927 by word of mouth in fact. He even wrote a secret pamphlet intended only for this industrial-capitalist audience, which they then passed around to others. Besides active word-of-mouth campaigning, the NSDAP also placed posters everywhere they could, promoted speaking engagements and other party activities and viewpoints in their newspaper, sold various odds and ends to raise small funds (e.g. various items like soap with NSDAP packaging), and sent wealthier members abroad to raise funds from German expats and foreign sympathizers. Kurt Lüdecke excelled at this form of campaigning.

In the very beginning, Hitler and the NSDAP targeted veterans, farmers, workers, young men, noblemen and -women, small businessmen and -women and pensioners. These were the social classes who were initially the most receptive, due to the economy and prevailing anti-monarchism, but later on Hitler's support base included wealthy elites, heavy

industrialists, fascist and monarchist foreigners, landed Junkers, veterans' organizations, the German Army and Navy and even Montagu Norman, a prominent English banker and personal friend of Hjalmar Schacht who, according to both his private secretary Ernest Skinner and Émile Moreau, despised Jews, the French and Roman Catholics. He unabashedly refused to assist France's treasury with anything and proved willing and able to arrange financing for the NSDAP by way of his connections to Bruno von Schröder (Schroder Bank), Kurt von Schröder (Stein Bank) and the Bank of England (F. C. Tiarks and M. Norman himself). Norman had strong sympathy for the Germans which dated back to his days as a student in Dresden, and naturally offered to financially assist and thereby stabilize the new government that his friend Schacht had openly supported since 1931. Since Hitler was hostile to France (he saw the French as Foreign Enemy Number One), friendly to Britain (which he did not feel was a threat), and discriminatory towards Jews, the three things that Norman found favorable, he recommended that Kurt von Schröder extend credit to Hitler's party, which now controlled the government. Schacht was Hitler's de facto lifeline in this respect, a nationalist German banker who had his own designs for German recovery, but who was also personally impressed with Hitler's speeches and mass appeal, which no other politician possessed.

As for Hitler's initial support, many farmers were burdened by debt, and most, including landed Junkers, felt threatened by Communist expropriation and insufficient protective agricultural tariffs. The veterans were receptive because they felt betrayed by the ruling class, especially the liberal-democrats of the SPD, and because they had a difficult time finding work. Workers, who were mostly young men, were receptive because they felt they were being exploited by the business class, but primarily because they were the most negatively affected by the inflation and unemployment. Pensioners on fixed incomes were receptive to Hitler's socialist stance. Noblemen and -women were interested in Hitler because he opposed Freemasonry and expropriation of their landed estates, and because he hinted at restoration of the monarchy. Additionally, all of these groups generally opposed Marxist-Communism. Most of the German masses were not interested in a revolutionary bloodbath or agricultural collectivism, but economic and social security as well as justice and prosperity for themselves; the German elites did not support expropriation and collectivization. Hitler's main opposition in the formative years came from the Communists, who denounced him as a tool of capitalism and from the former

nobility; the heavy industrialists, who distrusted his socialism and the SA (they feared the SA was nothing but a Communistic horde); and the left-wing faction within his own party, who questioned Hitler's financial sources and pro-business stance.

When someone requested to join the NSDAP, one paid one's initial annual dues and was then given a membership card and asked to perform some service or task for the party. This could be anything from putting up posters before speaking engagements to spreading the word by simply talking about the NSDAP or handing out flyers on street corners and at beer halls. After the Hitler-Strasser break, he or she was asked to swear allegiance to Adolf Hitler. Vetting was likely performed by those members doing the actual talking and recruiting in the streets, as there was no known formal vetting procedure. As long as a person paid his annual dues and served the party loyally, he or she was trusted. Those who wished to break with the party were actually told to leave by Hitler himself at a rally that took place after the Strasser and Stennes affairs. We'll revisit this topic later on.

Along these lines, Kurt Lüdecke, Otto Wagener and Ernst Röhm played leading roles in arming, training and drilling SA men. Their personal fundraising; their secret dealings with the German Army (Reichswehr), which had many prominent sympathizers of the NSDAP and SA; and Lüdecke's connections to black-market Jewish arms dealers proved essential to building a credible paramilitary threat to the status quo. The government in Berlin tended to ignore SA violence against Communists because it opposed a Communist takeover. Also, Hitler's party supported German national unity at all costs, so Hitler and his SA were worth tolerating to prevent Bavarian secession. Hitler's real bargaining base was his SA and the masses. Without both, he could afford to be ignored by the elites, government and industry; however with both he was a true threat, like the Communists. Lüdecke, Wagener and Röhm all led, at one point or another, regular drilling and paramilitary basic training at a large hall funded by party members and various supporters. Marching in formation and drills also took place in the forests and countryside when possible, but mostly it occurred in the party's own rented hall or on a wealthy sympathizer's private estate. Fortunately for unemployed and poor members, the party paid for everyone's uniforms.

When SA and SS ranks were introduced, the requirements were loyalty and leadership aptitude. The SS consisted of men handpicked by Hitler himself. Thus, he vetted them personally. As a matter of fact, Hitler usually personally appointed leaders to their positions even in the SA. He recalled Röhm from Bolivia, for instance, to reorganize and lead the SA. Hitler tended to choose people who he felt would resist falling prey to groupthink. Historians have tended to characterize this as Hitler's "divide and rule" policy, but in-depth study of the party's early development suggests instead that Hitler chose people who would (a) not challenge or question his leadership, and (b) not fall prey to the "yes man" temptation. This appointment procedure did two things: it prevented serious intraparty division by subordinating all to Hitler himself, while at the same time it encouraged intraparty rivalries, which prevented groupthink. Leaders could disagree and even challenge one another's authority without destroying the party. Hitler based promotion solely on performance, not status. This tendency increased later on during the war especially after Hitler established the NSFO (National Socialist Commanding Officer Corps). This NS-high command was likely enacted to replace or take over the OKW (Armed Forces High Command). Hitler wanted select NSFO officers to undergo a 4- to 18-hour course in political-ideological instruction. He himself appointed the head of the NSFO, Hermann Reinecke, in December 1944.

The NSDAP expanded into cities and states outside of Munich (Bavaria), where it had its Brown House headquarters, by appointing certain members to run party operations and perform party services in their own states, cities, towns and villages. The most well-known example of an NSDAP member-cum-leader who acquired almost enough personal power, financial backing and mass following to challenge Hitler himself was Gregor Strasser. Hitler was able to prevent a crisis from developing with his gifts for clever maneuvering and personal appeal, but such risks are inherent in any organization that becomes as powerful as the NSDAP. And they are risks that must be taken if a party's leadership wishes it to develop and grow. Talented, committed and qualified speakers and leaders were appointed to run operations in every location possible. But Berlin NSDAP members also traveled around giving speeches and lectures and soliciting financial support. All speaking engagements required admittance fees. Hitler himself was constantly traveling and meeting with workers and elites alike to recruit new members and bolster his finances.

At the end of 1920, the NSDAP had about 3,000 members. Membership then grew from 27,000 in 1925 to 108,000 in 1928. In August 1931 the NSDAP created its own intelligence and security sector. Heinrich Himmler established the SD (Sicherheitsdienst) and Reinhard Heydrich was appointed head of the organization, which was kept separate from the SS (Schutzstaffel). By the time of the Strasser crisis, the SA was some 400,000 members strong and the party itself had grown to 2 million by 1933. In 1932, it was large enough to achieve control of 37% of the Reichstag.

Here are the election results from 1920 to 1933:

Adapted from James E. and Suzanne Pool. Who Financed Hitler: The Secret Funding of Hitler's Rise to Power 1919 – 1933, p. 494.

Political Parties in the Reichstag	June 1920	May 1924	Dec. 1924	May 1928	Sep. 1930	July 1932	Nov. 1932	Mar. 1933
Communist Party (KPD)	4	62	45	54	77	89	100	81
Social Democratic Party (SPD)	102	100	131	153	143	133	121	120
Catholic Center Party (BVP)	65	81	88	78	87	97	90	93
Nationalist Party (DNVP)	71	95	103	73	41	37	52	52

National Socialist Party (NSDAP)	-	-	-	12	107	230	196	288
Other Parties	98	92	73	121	122	22	35	23

One can see that the NSDAP lost most of its former 230 seats as of July 1932 to the even more radical-revolutionary Communist Party (KPD) in November 1932, not to conservative Catholics or social-democrats. The conservative nationalists (DNVP) only gained 15 seats. These results, contrary to most historiography, do not imply the demise of the NSDAP, but the masses' disaffection with any party that was not willing to promise sweeping social and economic change for the majority, even if change meant bloodshed. Hitler and the NSDAP were not viewed as extreme enough, so they lost seats to the KPD! This alarmed men like Hjalmar Schacht and Franz von Papen so much that they were finally willing to give Hitler the opportunity to become chancellor.

He actually should have received the chancellorship in July 1932 when his party had the most seats in the Reichstag, but the industrialists and noblemen surrounding General Schleicher, Franz von Papen and President Hindenburg opposed his appointment to the chancellorship. So much for James Warburg's and the Rothschilds' "magical funding."

Hitler faced so much resistance at this stage that he, like others, resorted to blackmail. Hitler arranged a private meeting with President Hindenburg's son Oskar, during which he is suspected to have threatened to expose his father's role in the repeated taxpayer bailouts of the Junkers' mismanaged, bankrupted estates. Since blackmail and intrigue had been used to cheat Hitler of his due appointment, he decided that he could also play such a game. Hindenburg appointed him chancellor shortly thereafter, which most historians claim was at the behest of von Papen. We see that von Papen's desire to prevent a Communist majority by giving Hitler the chancellorship was only partly why Hindenburg appointed him. Hitler won, but not because he received covert funding. Franz von Papen continued to intrigue against Hitler and urged industrialists to withdraw their financial support of the NSDAP! The goal of this so-called "cabinet of barons" was to give Hitler just enough power to satisfy him personally without actually allowing him to

attain a majority strong enough to overthrow the status quo, but just strong enough to prevent a Communist majority.

Given this context of stalemate, the speed of the NSDAP's growth in just 6 years and its subsequent attainment of absolute power were only possible with an authoritarian leader in a crooked political situation in which blackmail, corruption and political sleight-of-hand were the order of the day. What had started as a democratic-style workers' party with a simple executive committee to which Hitler was appointed in the early 1900s became an authoritarian-style organization with its own uniforms, offices, training facilities, insurance company, merchandise, newspaper, propaganda machine, army (the SA) and security apparatus (SS and SD). This was nothing short of impressive and most of the credit for its success goes to those leaders and members like Hitler, Hess, Gansser, Eckart, Funk, Schwarz, Feder, Keppler, Himmler, Rosenberg, Goebbels, the Strassers (before 1932), Scheubner-Richter, Hanfstaengl, Lüdecke, Göring and Röhm, all of whom literally devoted their lives to the party.

NSDAP events were staged as often as they could be afforded. The newspaper was of course always available—it was a daily—so the public and members always knew what was going on from day to day. Hitler gave speeches and met with important wealthy persons almost non-stop after his release from prison. He was keen enough to purchase motor vehicles, which were rare in those days. Speedy travel was vital to defeating rival parties like the Communists, who still had to walk to their various speaking engagements and meetings. The NSDAP's doors, so to speak, were always open to receive new recruits. Interested persons either signed up at simple on-site recruitment centers or they mailed their applications to the party's headquarters in Munich.

Inconvenient facts about Hitler and the NSDAP

The following is a list of important facts gleaned from the Pools' Who Financed Hitler. This list clarifies and summarizes our introduction to the NSDAP's development, support and financing. More importantly, this list exposes numerous myths associated with Hitler

and the NSDAP, such as Hitler's "militatarism," NSDAP funding via Paul or Sidney (James) Warburg and the Rothschilds, and Hitler's unpopularity amongst most Germans.

Gustav Stresemann was as militarily inclined as Adolf Hitler. Thus the idea that Hitler's appointment to the chancellorship meant war in future is moot.

Upper-class hostages, including members of Thule, were literally lined up and murdered in 1918 by the Communists. A total of 12 hostages were shot in a schoolyard in Munich.

The Pools noted that since the German economy was not harmful to most industrialists' profits overall, they as a group wished to uphold the status quo. And that was the problem with them from the perspective of revolutionary parties like Hitler's, as well as the impoverished, unemployed millions.

Hitler and Hess, not Göring and Goebbels as claimed by "Sidney Warburg," solicited money in 1929. German industrialist Emil Kirdorf likely gave the NSDAP money at this time.

Radek, Levine and Axelrod, all Communists, were Jewish. These three men and the terror they inflicted upon Fritz Thyssen and his father personally, including imprisonment and death threats, changed Thyssen's life. From that point on he supported Hitler, and fervently so.

French martial law and Ruhr resource demands were too much for Fritz Thyssen. He was arrested and fined 300,000 gold marks for encouraging German workers to passively resist French military occupation. The French opened fire on these German workers killing and wounding hundreds.

Thyssen downplayed his support of the National Socialists. He gave 1,250,000 Reichsmarks between 1928 and 1929. This was the exact timing of Sidney Warburg's alleged covert cash transfers to Hitler.

Kirdorf had Jewish friends and bank connections, including Dr. Arthur Salomonsohn. In spite of these big money connections, Kirdorf gave very little to Hitler and the NSDAP.

Thyssen and Kirdorf saw little hope for Germany. France and England had a monopoly over one quarter of the world and were determined to crush Germany's global competitiveness.

The Versailles Dictate was Germany's economic end—really, truly and totally.

The "Treaty" was actually an economic weapon designed to permanently cripple Germany as an industrial competitor. Germany's total reparations payments amounted to $32 billion, which equates to $425 billion today, or $6.6 billion per year.

The NSDAP was not put into power by international Jewish interests as some researchers suggest. The NSDAP fought for its power. For example, in just a single street battle between the National Socialists and Communists, 300 men were killed. Hitler struggled for 14 years to achieve power and was nearly shot dead during his attempted putsch, facts which challenge this thesis.

The I. G. Farben conglomerate and high finance never factored into the Hitler-NSDAP equation before 1933.

According to the Pools, since nothing Germany did had worked to relieve the unemployment and trade imbalance, an imperialist policy was necessary for Germany's economic survival. She had earnestly tried everything else.

Big business's main motive for supporting Hitler and the NSDAP was to prevent Communism at all costs.

General von Seeckt operated under a façade of pro-democracy (like Hitler) until the day when all democratic chains could be broken. Indeed the intellectual demilitarization of Germany was, to von Seeckt, the greatest threat of all.

Russo-German military collaboration was championed by von Seeckt, not Hitler, and started in 1921. (Before the Treaty of Rapallo). Von Seeckt was instrumental in this collaboration. Lest we overlook it: Hitler, and no one else, had a reserve army—the SA. Thus the years 1921 to 1922 saw some degree of Russian funding of the NSDAP via the Reichswehr's secret Russian collaboration efforts.

The Allies destroyed Krupp's industry, which provided Krupp with a key motive for later supporting the NSDAP. Krupp, with the help of foreign subsidies, established anonymous companies to carry out arms construction and testing in neutral countries long before Hitler came to power.

Stresemann, like Hitler, wanted to see Germany reemerge as a world power. Neither von Seeckt nor Stresemann was a liberal-democrat (i.e. neither supported democracy, which was imposed upon Germany against her will.)

Holding companies were used to rebuild the German Navy in the early 1920s, long before Hitler's ascension.

"Liberal-Democratic" Weimar Germany was providing covert assistance to German rearmament efforts in every way possible. Krupp was subsidized by the Weimar regime, not by Hitler.

Given the industrial context of that time period, Thyssen's industry would die without total rearmament. This was a consequence of Germany's overdependence on industrialization,. As suggested by Lawrence Dennis in The Dynamics of War and Revolution, a developed nation like Germany had the choice to contract severely in every way, including population-wise, or expand. Most German leaders opted for the latter.

German rearmament began earnestly "production-wise" in 1928—five full years before Adolf Hitler was appointed chancellor.

The Social Democrats, SPD, supported rearmament.

Rearmament does not prove that Germany was planning aggressive warfare or that Germany was "militaristic."

Both France's and Poland's militaries were threatening to encircle and occupy Germany in 1919.

All of the German power elite had the same goal, only different methods of achieving that goal—to reestablish Germany as a world power. However, only Adolf Hitler understood international power politics or "economy by the sword." Hitler asked the industrialists in 1927: Does it benefit our nationality now or in the future, or will it be injurious to it? Expediency is the basis of all alliances.

France, not England, was Enemy Number One in Hitler's view.

Political bribes were not illegal in the Weimar Republic.

The rule of special interest groups and the power of money (with which to buy Reichstag deputies) destroyed the Weimar Republic's chances of survival. Both are, in fact, inherent

features of all democracies, which intentionally give the masses the illusion of power and voice in government to prevent their discontent.

The SPD was the political instrument of the trade unions and the bureaucracy of organized labor. All of the rest, save the KPD, were big business's interest groups incognito.

Walther Rathenau set the Weimar "big business" precedent, not Hitler or the NSDAP.

The Ruhrlade was a secret society of heavy industrialists, with 12 members, who met secretly to set joint economic and political policy.

Hugenberg and the Nationalist Party had far more big business and discreet financial backing and prestige than the NSDAP. But not even Hugenberg was an industrialist's tool. He opposed the Anglo-Freemasonic Dawes Plan while several of his industrialist backers supported the plan.

The Anglo-Freemasonic Young Plan was enacted 11 years after the war, which demanded that Germans pay "reparations" for the next 59 years!

Hugenberg and Strasser both underestimated Hitler. He was no one's "pawn." This was already evident around the time of the passing of the Freedom Law in 1929, right around the time of Sidney Warburg's alleged cash promise to Hitler. The Warburg myth was used to discredit Hitler by the Strasser-Stennes faction of the NSDAP. Stennes, with 80,000 SA men under his command, seized the NSDAP headquarters in Berlin and occupied it to destroy Hitler, but Hitler was able to largely circumvent recapturing the headquarters via violent means by establishing his right of ownership of the Berlin headquarters. He did this simply by presenting his ownership proof to the courts after the holidays ended. The police were therefore obliged to retake the headquarters for him and Captain Walther Stennes' attempted anti-Hitler coup fell apart. Interestingly, Stennes was never even an NSDAP member.

Hitler used Karl Lüger's methods: utilize the existing implements of power.

Thyssen admitted to funding the NSDAP. His continuous support and Hitler's strategic alliance with Hugenberg and the Nationalist Party meant money for Hitler in 1929—none of which was from Sidney Warburg.

After 1930, the Völkischer Beobachter generated day-to-day revenue and paid off all of its outstanding debts.

There was no “secret” funding early on. Max Amann mortgaged all of the NSDAP’s property and forestalled all financial obligations until after the elections in 1930, which surprised everyone, including Hitler. Rallies and occasional donations by the wealthy supplemented funds after September 1930.

NSDAP memberships swelled due to the “bandwagon effect” after the party’s huge electoral success. The VB also started generating substantial advertising revenue. At one point Hitler actually let his prohibitionist idealism go too far with the brewers and they canceled all their VB ads. Fellow party members had to coax them back.

Adolf Müller helped the Nazis with the VB, the only paper that did not drop in circulation after the Depression began.

The United States likely destroyed Party Treasurer Franz Schwarz’s records, which were meticulous: Hitler had even told him to denote names of anonymous donors! All of the records are gone. Americans brutally interrogated Schwarz and likely murdered him in 1946. The Anglo-Americans were determined to incriminate only German big business for funding the NSDAP at the IMT. Given that the United States did this, one suspects that there was more American-based funding than just Henry Ford and Teutonia behind the NSDAP, but what that was we will never know. The Anglos were likely trying to cover up American industrial involvement with NS-Germany after 1933, such as that of Standard Oil which we’ve already discussed.

Generals, namely Alfred Jodl, were won over by Hitler at his Leipzig trial.

Big business was reassured by Hitler’s total party control and non-Communist stance after he ordered his 107 deputies to vote against the Nazis’ own “left-wing” bill, introduced by Strasser et al.

The German economy was controlled by the government and a private bank cartel 2,500 banks strong before Hitler assumed power.

In the summer of 1931, the Ruhrlade made its first contribution to the NSDAP, and Göring was being paid by Thyssen at this time as well.

Frau Quandt joined the NSDAP in 1930 and brought lots of wealthy influence with her.

Hitler recalled Ernst Röhm in 1930 to lead the SA. He had been living in Bolivia.

Kaiser Wilhelm and his sons supported the NSDAP in an effort to try and convince Hitler to reestablish the monarchy.

Brüning was a de facto dictator but was failing, because the Depression was worsening.

The Credit-Anstalt, a Rothschild bank branch in Austria, experienced a devastating run in May 1931, which crashed all German banks and eventually even London's banks. So much for the Rothschilds' endless, untouchable wealth!

Freemasonic France and America exacerbated the German collapse by recalling short-term loans to Germany and Austria and with the passing of the Hawley-Smoot tariff.

The German People's Party, which enjoyed more conservative support than Hitler, demanded constitutional revision terminating the parliamentary system and giving Hindenburg the power to appoint a government.

Other nationalist parties got a lot more money and support than Hitler, but they maintained the status quo and displeased the masses immensely. Thus only Hitler had the masses' support and could therefore not be brushed aside or ignored, not even by the moneyed elite.

Big business, namely industrialists, was paying the NSDAP by 1931.

The Harzburg Front organized and rallied in 1931. Hjalmar Schacht gave a speech at this event and shockingly declared that the Weimar government was truly and utterly bankrupt. He, more than anyone else that day including Hitler, brought incalculable benefit to the NSDAP. He was after all the man who had saved the German economy before by introducing the Rentenmark.

Hitler had his man Keppler meet informally with businessmen to create the NSDAP's economic policy. This was known as the "Circle of Friends for the Economy." This is actually where Reinhardt comes into play, the man behind the Reinhardt Plan which Hitler enacted shortly after coming to power. Reinhardt, not Hitler or an NSDAP member, openly called for rearmament in 1932.

Walther Funk met with Kurt von Schröder, a partner in J. H. Stein of Cologne. A man with great skill for negotiation, Funk was able to "satisfy Schröder" of Hitler's "good will" towards "international banking."

Mussolini gave unofficial support to the NSDAP. France backed the Bavarian separatists while Italy supported the Bavarian nationalists. Hitler was the only nationalist who opposed France and was willing to let Italy keep control of the South Tyrol (with a population of 250,000 Germans).

Hitler received Italian fascist funding, which only came to light in 1932. Mussolini also sent the NSDAP weapons in the 1920s.

The U.S.-based Teutonia gave Hitler regular donations.

Montagu Norman was the governor of the Bank of England for 24 years. He was anti-France, disliked Jews immensely, was opposed to Versailles, and favored Germany due to his earlier studies there. Norman lent money to the Nazis after 1933 via his personal friend Schacht. He may have channeled funds via Baron Kurt von Schröder and J. H. Stein and Company in 1932, but this is not proven. Schröder was a German partner in J. H. Stein.

Viscount Rothermere of the Daily Mail gave Ernst Hanfstaengl money. He was a staunchly pro-German Anglo who despised Jews.

It is crucial to understand that Anglo-Saxon foreign policy was designed to prevent any single power—whether France, Germany or Russia—from attaining formidable power enough to rival that of Britain. This was the real reason why King Edward VIII was forced to abdicate; he was simply too pro-German. His sympathy as well as that of Montagu Norman, the Mosleys, the Mitfords and Viscount Rothermere made Hitler miscalculate on Britain. He thought he had more Anglo-Saxon support than he really did.

Deterding met Alfred Rosenberg in Britain and likely promised him funding. Deterding controlled oil interests in Romania, Russia, California, Trinidad, the Dutch Indies and Mexico. He also had pumps in Mesopotamia and Persia. The Soviets seized his oil fields in Baku, Grozny and Miakop and nationalized them, thereby becoming a serious competitor to Deterding with his own former oil lands.

Georg Bell was Deterding's contact agent with the NSDAP. Deterding did not just back the NSDAP, but also White Russians and Ukrainian nationalists, as well as anti-Soviet Georgian rebels.

Deterding married a pro-National Socialist woman and moved to Germany. He was the one who gave the real 'big money' to the NSDAP in 1931, 1932, and 1933—£30 to £55

million. Dr. Kahr claimed that French money flowed to Hitler after going through nine exchanges, but this has not been proven. In fact, Bavarian parties like the BVP were backed by France only because they wished to break away from Berlin!

The Treaty of Trianon was even worse and more unjust than Versailles. Hungary lost population and territory and was completely impoverished. This treaty soured most Hungarians on democracy. In 1919, Bela Kuhn ruled ruthlessly for three months in Hungary: he confiscated and expropriated private land, slaughtered peasants indiscriminately and further destroyed the economy, which resulted in famine. Hungarians were overwhelmingly anti-Communist, anti-Freemason and anti-Jewish after that. Most of these Communists, including Bela Kuhn, were Jewish Freemasons. This experience is what led the Hungarian nationalist Gyula (Julius) Gömbös to finance the NSDAP.

Hitler aimed for "careers open to talent" according to Otto Dietrich, a policy opposed to hereditary power.

Here is the explanation for one of Goebbels's economic improvement references in his diary: Hitler's Düsseldorf Industry Club speech of January 27. This fundraising event explains Goebbels's entry of February 8.

To give people some perspective on the German economy before Hitler: there were 17,500,000 unemployed Germans over the winter of 1931 to 1932. This was nearly one third of the entire population of Germany!

Stennes's rebellion is very important, but all too often overlooked. Stennes was a paid agent of Strasser and Captain Ehrhardt, both of whom had big business (industrialists) and one (Otto Wolff) Jewish backers.

As a result of this rebellion and other street violence, the SA, SS and HJ were all banned by a Brüning decree signed by President Hindenburg. This was in 1932. So much for Rothschild and Warburg supporting Hitler! Why would they let their "pawn" get banned? This ban was an attempt to destroy the NSDAP and Hitler for good. Besides, if Hitler was really just a "tool" of a vast international entity as researchers like Jim Condit and Guido Preparata suggest, then why didn't he win the presidency in 1932? What was this entity's motive for forestalling his "power grab" if it was in fact behind him?

Paul Silverberg, Jewish, financed Gregor Strasser, not Hitler. Silverberg was head of the R.A.G., one of the largest coal companies in the entire world. He supported the chancellor ruling by presidential decree (Brüning in particular).

Brüning, not Hitler, asked the question: is democracy able to work in Germany?

Concluding thoughts

Paul Silverberg was extremely liberal, except for his own business enterprise. He naturally favored "equal rights" for Jews and big business, but not for anyone else; he likewise favored "individual rights over national rights" and was therefore completely opposed to the NSDAP. Silverberg was angry at Brüning's ouster. He opposed von Papen, supported General Schleicher as chancellor, and gave both Schleicher and Hitler's rival Gregor Strasser large sums of money.

Gregor Strasser received 10,000 marks per month, beginning in the spring of 1931, for the NSDAP from heavy industry. So much for Sidney Warburg! Walther Funk got 3,000 marks per month in 1931 and Hitler got 100,000 marks from various coal companies that same year, shortly before the Reichstag elections. As one can see his alleged 1931 "miracle financing" was no miracle at all. It came from German coal companies, not Sidney Warburg. In fact, most of the NSDAP's money came from the party itself: insurance premiums, dues, speaking fees, etc. Brüning, not Hitler, was backed by I. G. Farben. Chancellor Schleicher, with Silverberg's and other industrial bigwigs' money, conspired with Ernst Röhm on a plan to incorporate the SA into the German Army and thereby betray Hitler.

Clearly, Franz von Papen was no puppet either, contrary to the thesis of Guido Preparata (Conjuring Hitler). He refused to lift the SA ban until June 15. He also banned political parades until after 30 June 1932 and made himself Reich Commissioner of Prussia. He enjoyed widespread support among industrialists, big business, Hindenburg and the Army officer corps. His intent was to block Hitler from ever attaining more than nominal power in government. Hitler was so financially strapped thanks to this intrigue against him that he ended up signing contracts amounting to giving away everything the party owned to finance his 1932 election: he won over 13 million votes and 230 seats in the Reichstag.

This was nothing short of impressive. He should've been appointed chancellor right then and there.

The real question was whether Hitler could be bought. That was the question that Franz von Papen and Chancellor Schleicher were asking. Since it did not seem likely, both opposed his chancellorship as long as possible. Von Papen conceded in the end: he wanted power for himself and he did not want a Communist majority in the Reichstag. By agreeing to appoint Hitler chancellor in 1933, von Papen thought that he could satisfy Hitler's personal power needs and keep the NSDAP in check, while at the same time use Hitler's party as a means to prevent the Communists from ever achieving a majority. Only Hitler had the mass following to pull off such a plan. And only von Papen could secure for Hitler the appointment, funding and support of industrialists he needed to become chancellor with a stable government. Indeed Hitler deserved the chancellorship, and was fully entitled to it, since he had the masses' support and the largest number of seats in the Reichstag. The rest, as they say, is history.

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